The Seed Sower.

A Magazine for the Church, the School, and the Home.

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Bury Thy Dead, Beloved Ones.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF SIEBEL BY RUTH WILLS.

Bury thy dead, beloved ones,
Deep in thy loving heart;
They shall to thine own being
New, endless life impart.

For, from that grave arising,
An angel fair and bright
Shall come to dwell beside thee,
Nor evermore take flight.

Thine own life would'st thou bury
Thyself from self be free,
So wer't thou dead, yet truly living
Thou would'st for ever be.

Mary, the Mother.

Oh, happy night: a child is born,
No cradled pomp for him is spread,
But one with yearning heart is near—
He hath whereon to lay his head.

Oh, heavy night: he goeth now
By lonely ways with homeless tread;
Now bird and beast more sheltered lie—
He hath not where to lay his head.

Oh, saddest night: supporting hands
Do hurried office for the dead,
But one with patient heart is there—
He hath whereon to lay his head.

Easter, 1900. E. P. B.

Our Aims and Hopes.

A DEVOTIONAL ADDRESS AT THE LEICESTER CONFERENCE,

BY THE REV. E. L. THOMAS, B.A.

"Thy kingdom come; thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth."—MATT. vi. 10.

Perhaps the most interesting thing connected with the present war is the insight one gets into the lives of the men who are bearing the brunt of the battles, as manifested in their letters home. After one of the earlier and most deadly of the battles, a soldier wrote home these striking words: "More than once we said to one another that death would be a relief to us. The sun was boiling hot, and the river only taunted us, for before we could quench our thirst we had to win the day, which, thank God, we did." He concludes: "If I am spared I shall not be long away, as the war is nearly over." One other little passage is touching in this connection: "It was a very trying time; every minute you could hear some poor soldier calling for help, while not one, but a great many, lay dead and dying all round us. To as many as I could, I gave all the water I had, for that is the first thing the wounded ask for." Which of us could understand those words in the Book of Revelation

like this poor soldier longing for death, or longing for the water of the river—"and he shewed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street" of the city. It is the passionate language of the martyrs, the persecuted, the wounded. It is the unspeakable thirst that gave rise to this fervid language of the Book of Revelation. All the commentators and exegetes in the world are less understanding than that thirsty, unwounded soldier amongst the still more thirsty wounded. Well, that soldier in his artless fashion has given us a very touching parable of deeper spiritual things, and has created one of the most genuine and noble bits of poetry the war has yet called forth. "To as many as I could," said he, "I gave all the water I had, for that is the first thing the wounded ask for. More than once we said to one another that death would be a relief to us. The sun was boiling hot, and the river only taunted us, for before we could quench our thirst we had to win the day, which, thank God, we did." The parable would hardly be complete without the pathetic words, "the war is nearly over." So said the early Christians weeping at the foot of the cross: and so said the Christians a little later on, when struggle and martyrdom made them thirst for the water of life again,—and so on has it been through the ages: after each struggle and temporary victory, and a draught of the water of the river, rises the belief "the war is nearly over," our aims, our hopes are nearly fulfilled. If we applied these words to our own life's story we should find them very faithful to the truth. But they contain a picture also of our life in a community struggling, battling for freedom, for truth, for brotherhood. We have done our best with our limited means; we gave what water we had, as far as it would go. We have felt the heat of the day and the strain of the contest, till even victory, if it should ever come, would seem robbed of its sweets. The symbol of victory, a draught from the crystal stream was ever before our eyes, *taunting* us, yet *alluring* us. Long time we battled for freedom, and not till the hot day was won did its cooling streams reward us. Even then, we thought "the war was nearly over." Then we battled for truth, a true Bible, a true interpretation, a true doctrine; again the same experience, at first very bitter, and then very sweet and refreshing; and again we thought the war was nearly over. The most difficult of the campaigns is before us, and there are many who do not realise it, and some seem already disorganised, and some seem even disbanding, saying, "let us rest and be thankful." It is the fatal delusion that the war is nearly over, when it is only one more battle that is actually over. And we may be sure that when or if we win the next great battle for a truer fellowship and a sincerer brotherhood it will but be the prelude to something richer and truer and purer still. For what is the great aim, the great hope? This surely, that God's kingdom come, that "God's will be done on earth, as it is in heaven"—an infinite, a perfect thing. Ah! what a road lies before us, full of thorns and roughnesses. How many prejudices and antipathies to overcome! How many false judgments to rectify. How long will it take before we *act* even as if we loved our neighbour as our self (even when we do not or cannot) and did unto him as we should wish that he would do unto us? They tell us of the Church Triumphant in Heaven. Then there must be cheerful giving of selves, and service and whatever else there is to give; they must not rend each other there, in even the kindest-intentioned gossip, but *heal* each other, they must have their minds filled with the thought and praise and love of God, so that there be no nook or cranny of a dark spot where one thought can brood over self, or whence one can aim a wicked shaft at one's neighbour. No, we are still the Church Militant, brooding darkly at times over our own ills, and still more darkly over the ills of others, ills done by others. We struggle, we faint, we thirst, we take a moment's pity on some worse case than our own, and give all the water we have (or pray God we do), and the crystal river flows at our feet, but not a drop to drink until our task is done and the battle fought and won. And then we say in our blindness, "the war is nearly over." So thought the heart-sick, weary soldier, while alas! the campaign had scarcely begun; nay, immediate defeats and calamities were to follow so soon. It is so with us. As one principle after another is fought for and won, and we rest a little after the battle, we think the war is nearly

over. Perhaps that very thought has somewhat let down our energies a little, made us less alert, less prepared. Surely, we thought, if we have won so much, and with such bitter experiences, little more remains to be done. We look around for grateful applause, and for crowding friends gathering to our victorious cause. But we look in vain. The war has not only not ended but the campaign has taken a new and calamitous turn, or so at first it seems. Some new principle has to be fought for and won. It is the fate often of pioneers, before the main army has time to come up, to be a forlorn hope and to be decimated. Yet to have made it possible for the main army to enter upon its easier victory, is not that glory enough for us? After all, why hanker after the lesser joys of being in the great main army, when all that makes life worth living, or death sweet?—freedom, difficulty, danger, hostile surroundings, closer comradeship is there in the front—isolated, no doubt, because of too much enthusiasm (it may be) or because of the chances of war. To leave metaphor, do you think if we do faithfully some task, each of us, in our Church work, we need the mere crowded pews to make us happier, and make worship real? Surely the only real worship is that which results in teaching us to get some task for Christ's sake, for God's sake, to do, and do it doggedly—in the heat of the day, and while the river taunts us with its refreshing coolness, which we may not drink of till we have won. I know I am stating an unpopular principle, an unwelcome principle. For the tendency is on all hands to say, let us rest and be thankful: we battled for freedom, we battled for truth; the hour has not struck for the establishment of the true meaning of brotherhood—that is too arduous an affair. It is incredible that small causes should dwindle into nothingness, if a sense of brotherhood were present. To grow rapidly tired of each other is a sign of the times, but it is no sign of Christian brotherhood. Each says, indeed, give me something to do, but not this, not that, not the other; or turns round on the preachers saying, "O, bring numbers here, that we may know the warmth and fulness of crowded worship." I know we are approaching a crisis not only in our little communities but throughout the larger community, and there is much searching of hearts everywhere, and no one is more taunted by the river of water clear as crystal, than the ministers (for the battle has long begun for them) and no one (so arduous is the battle becoming), would sooner be a day-labourer, or die, than they (as far as mere feelings go) though with the soldier knowing full well that without desperate battle, struggle and victory the illusory river will never become a reality. If but the churches would also search their hearts and ask what are they aiming at, what are they hoping for, there would be fewer wounded leaders—the enemy seems to make them their special sport. Our aim surely is not now to fight for freedom, that is won; nor to convince anyone that there is only one God, that, too, is practically won; but rather to show by the kind of brotherhood we establish what kind of God we worship. Our aim, our hope is to learn to understand in ourselves how God's will is done in Heaven, that so we may fulfil it on earth "as it is in Heaven." It is going to be a different type of warfare altogether; not accompanied by crowded audiences as in the other great conflicts, but by staunch, self-sacrificing individuals. A bishop once said to a clergyman, "Why, Mr. So and So, you seem to think that the Kingdom of God will come upon this earth." "Yes, my lord," replied he, "that is exactly what many of us hope." Yes, and the clear implication of the words of the Lord's Prayer is that we know what is meant by "as it is in Heaven." *What ought to be*, that is the spiritual meaning of those words. And the key to *what ought to be* is in every one's keeping. And if we are to help to establish what ought to be, then we go back to the original idea of the Church, in which *each* becomes a centre of attraction, each must be as a light that cannot be hid. I am touching the vital point of all true Church life when I say that we ought *ever* to be asking, not is a minister attracting members or numbers to such and such a church, but are we each individually attracting others, even a single one more each, by the life that is in us, to join in worship, and join in hastening the day of the Lord. The new campaign will not be for extension and expansion, but for greater intensity of life and love, the concentration of a living brotherhood. We shall fail, doubtless, now here, now there, but sooner or later the churches will wake up and say: "these

were the pioneers, they were a forlorn hope, they courted disaster and ruin, but they saved the honour of the Church, and maintained its position in the vanguard of genuine Christianity.' Some of us are sometimes told, to our deep sorrow, by some who do not realise the changed nature of the campaign, that we do not preach Unitarianism in a pleasing and popular form; we don't preach Christ, we don't preach this, and we don't preach that—but we *do* preach in a thousand varying forms one only thing: we preach Christ and Him crucified, Him sacrificed; we preach, therefore, self-sacrifice, in its most perfect form, involving—yes—sacrifice of money (far more, and far more cheerfully given than any one could admit that it ever has been given, as a general thing), of much time, of much labour, and much thought, involving much venture and enterprise, so as to take part in any work that is going, or to initiate something new and true. Genuine brotherhood is genuine self-sacrifice. The war is not nearly over. Nay alas! we are suffering temporary defeat all along the line. Why? Because we did not realise the magnitude of the task. My own faith is that the Unitarians will lead the van in this battle, as in that for freedom, and that for truth. But it will be the toughest struggle, and it will take long before the main army comes up to complete the victory virtually assured by the smaller bands. While minor warfares were being carried on for freedom and for truth, the great campaign for love, for brotherhood, for the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, for God's Will being done on earth as it is in Heaven, was slowly approaching. The stern, courageous, fearless, yet sweet, loving, brotherly life of Christ may yet be shared by us: we too may partake in his noble struggle for brother men, above all for the weak, the poor, the oppressed, the duped, the deluded, the sinning, the wronged. The war is not nearly over. A glorious task God offers us! To help to bring about the sweet, the ordered, the loving life—"as it is in Heaven."

Perhaps the greatest charm of books is that we see in them that other men have suffered what we have. Some souls we ever find who could have responded to all our agony, be it what it may. This at least robs misery of its loneliness.

A Ministerial Nephew's Reply.

By ROBERT MANCOLL.

Dear Uncle Phil,—It was "real good" of you to forgive my remissness in not answering your first letter, and actually to address a second one to me forthwith. But the fact is, I've been having no end of a busy time lately—no, not over any learned tomes, as you will imagine, but over quite ordinary routine work of an unexciting character. As a matter of fact, one or two important volumes have been waiting to be read for weeks, but I've not had time to settle down to them.

Now, to come to your genial criticisms, for which you must let me thank you in all sincerity, and by which I hope to profit. Believe me, I am painfully conscious of my defective elocution, and hints designed to improve my delivery are always welcome. I trust the time may soon arrive when our college authorities will recognise that the teaching of elocution is quite as important a part of ministerial training as to impart to the student a knowledge of the precise bearing of the testimony of Justin Martyr upon the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel, or even an acquaintance with the "new economics" at which you are pleased to poke fun. Only this last week have I been reading a volume of sermons by one of our late ministers, and the delicacy of his touch, the breadth of his culture, the lucidity of his style—not to mention other attributes—leave but one explanation for the fact that such a man should have been "a failure in the pulpit." Having all other gifts, he lacked—had never cultivated—that of utterance. Comment is needless.

There is, however, one thing to be said concerning the ultra-seriousness with which you, no doubt deservedly, charge me. I am not alluding to the circumstance that in spite of the apparent "ease and confidence" with which I deal with "the greatest, most mysterious and sacredest subjects," I really feel very keenly the awfulness of these themes and my all too scanty equipment for handling them; nor will I inquire whether a sense of responsibility may not be the befitting attitude for any man—especially a young man—to approach such subjects in; but I do mean to say that there is much about our chapels, about the lifelessness of the services,

aye, and about the congregations, that does not exactly encourage "a cheerful pulpit." It doesn't make for cheerfulness to address empty pews, and to wonder why your own members cannot give themselves the trouble of attending just a little more regularly. If our churches were only moderately well filled we ministers would be a deal less lugubrious.

One of my fellow students, by the way, used to propound a favourite theory of his, in the *J. C. R.*, to the effect that some well-disposed person ought to leave the college a fund enabling deserving students to witness some first-rate Shakespearean acting in order to improve their elocutionary powers. I will forbear to speculate upon the likelihood of such a bequest being made.

Now, as for the length of my sermons. I daresay *that* would be reduced if I quickened my pace in delivering them, and I'm not sure but that this would be the best method of curtailment. But now, Uncle Phil, I really must expostulate with you. Do you mean to tell me that because a number of snippety publications have debauched the public palate and rendered vast numbers incapable of concentrated thought and sustained attention, therefore the pulpit, too, should minister to this growing superficiality of the age? Do you admire the inability of young people now-a-days to read Thackeray and George Eliot? Do you think this tendency one to be encouraged? You do not, my dear uncle, for I well remember the scorn with which you greeted the "Penny Popular Novels" which proposed to give you "the gist" of "Adam Bede" in forty-eight pages. "People are incapable of steady reading through an octavo volume," you say; "they are impatient of the long speeches in Shakespeare." . . . . Ye gods and little fishes! And are we poor parsons to model our sermons to suit the taste of such a barbarian public? Think it over, Uncle Phil, and tell me candidly whether you haven't been a little too "practical" for once!

Frankly, I don't think your suggested method of shortening sermons—"stopping by the clock"—is a practicable one, and I fancy there was a twinkle in your eye when you recommended it. But I've lately discovered one of my own, which I find works better than one might expect from anything so mechanical. It consists simply in making up my mind that I *will* treat my subject in so many pages. It sounds incredible, but it succeeds. After all, it is only the method of the journalist who receives orders from the editor to review a book in so many hundred words. The thing *can* be done. And if after you've heard me preach next time, at a quicker pace, you are of opinion that my sermons could still with advantage be shortened by a page or two, I will duly consider your suggestion. The temptation of exhausting an idea in one discourse is one that ceases to beset the young preacher at the end of a prodigiously short experience of what it means to have to bring forward two new ideas per week; he may even fall into the opposite extreme, and his last state be worse than the first.

And so, Uncle Phil, I'll conclude for to-day, thanking you once more for your friendly criticisms and hoping you will continue them. You are about the only person who is willing to do me this great service—tell me my faults to my face; you won't expect me in every case to see things from your point of view, or to fall in with your opinions; but I can always promise you my cordial gratitude for your kindness in expressing them.

Believe me ever,
Your affectionate nephew,
ROBERT MANCOLL.

Congregational Duty.

AN ADDRESS FROM THE CHAIR.

BY A LAYMAN.

There are some things that cannot well be said by a minister to his flock: there are other things that, when said by a minister, are apt to be nodded to as mere official truisms and therefore negligible. Some such things need to be said among us just now, and it has seemed to me advisable that I, who am one of yourselves, and not even an office-bearer in the church, should try to give them utterance. But let it be borne in mind that in all that follows I rank myself with you, I am only saying to you what I have many a time said to myself.

Two criteria may be used in judging of the success of a congregation. There is first the

material criterion, the figures which tell of numbers on the roll and of subscriptions to the church funds. There is secondly the spiritual criterion. I hope to make it clear in what I shall say later that I regard the second as the true criterion. But, inasmuch as the continued existence of a congregation depends on material considerations, and inasmuch as these are to some extent an index of the spiritual efficiency of a church, one cannot overlook them. Now, judged by the material criterion, our little church is in a bad way. There is a decrease in the number of members, there is a decrease in the amount subscribed. In accounting for this, some of us will blame the minister, some the office-bearers, some the caretaker, some the weather; it will occur to few to blame themselves. But the fact is that we are all to blame. We forget that the success of a church depends on each member as well as on the minister. And I want to enlarge upon this, to lay stress on some of the ways in which a member may minister to his church.

First of all, by regular attendance at the services. Of course we have all given up the superstition that there is any merit in mere church-going. But do we not carry this rational tendency too far? Some of us, I fear, have drifted into the opposite superstition that abstention from church-going is in itself a merit. But there are at least three valid reasons why we should attend church services regularly. In the first place, consider what a repellant influence our sparse attendance has on strangers. They come here with a hunger for human fellowship, with a thirst for God, and they are puzzled by our empty benches, rebuffed by our stand-offishness, chilled by our spiritual frost. The ideal church member would attend every service regularly, would keep a kindly eye on strangers, would nerve himself to give them a handshake and a friendly word, regardless of conventions, for to him the fact that two individuals had just been engaged in worshipping God together would seem introduction enough. Again, think how empty benches must dishearten our minister. Saddened that our souls demand so little nutriment from him, how can he continue the supply? Then let us come before him regularly, clamouring to be fed; and he, feeling our insistence, will give us of his best. But chiefly for our own best interests do I urge a regular attendance, for we cannot long continue to be living souls, constant in communion with our God, unless we take every opportunity of getting the uplift that comes from combined and public worship. Therein we experience the magnetism of the crowd; each attracted atom adds to the spiritual momentum; polarised and merged in the emotional mass the worshipper is carried immeasurably higher than he could attain alone.

But it is not enough to be merely present; each member ought to take an active part in the service. We are apt to shirk this. Some seem to think that just as they pay a laundress to do their washing for them, so they may pay a minister to do their worship for them. They sit in drowsy acquiescence, or in fastidious criticism. Now this, of course, is quite wrong. Worship cannot be done vicariously. Each member ought to come with a fervent desire to get at God for himself. The minister is only a lens to focus the aspirations of the congregation and bring them to a burning-point. If the aspirations be not there, of what use is the very best of ministers? Surely, of the three elements that enter into our public worship, the preaching is the least important. The prayers are obviously more important; in these the silent congregation can be just as operative as the voicing minister, for into every phrase the individual member may put his deepest private feelings, every word can set vibrating in him rich harmonies of the soul. But the praise is more important still. It has something of the outwardness of preaching, much of the inwardness of prayer. The humblest member, while he praises, may be parson, priest, and prophet, all in one. No matter if he lack a tuneful ear, or a pleasing voice; the fervour and the sound are the essentials; it is his duty and his privilege to make a joyful noise before the Lord. Still better is it, of course, if he be able to read music; then, provided with the tune-books, he can sing his proper part in the harmony wherever in the church he may be placed. And especially should the children be encouraged to join with skill and feeling in our praise, for nothing will so foster their development into the spiritually-minded human beings that they are destined to become.

Another duty I must speak of, the duty of

giving. I cannot here dilate on the priceless giving of time and work, or on the inestimable giving of spiritual impulse; I must dwell on the giving of money. And I would insist that a Free Church ought to be self-supporting. We have all come out from the orthodox churches, and our exodus is a declaration that freedom of religious thought is to us so precious that nothing short of a free church can allow of our soul's right growth. Then, surely, each one of us is in honour bound to bear his fair share of the expenses of the free church. What is that fair share? Do a simple little sum: divide the annual expenditure of the church by the number of members on the roll, and the result will give the average amount for which each member is responsible. The result will no doubt startle many. But let me recall the old Jewish maxim, that every man should give to the Lord one-tenth of all he gets. Now I would not elevate this maxim to the dignity of an eleventh commandment, nor would I suggest that support of our church is the only way of giving to the Lord. But I do say that we ought always to be asking ourselves, "How much can I give?" instead of "How little can I give?" and I do say that until we have contributed our fair share of church support we have no right to let our generosity or charity seek other channels. How are we to find the money? By self-denial. We hold that our souls are more important than our bodies. Then the necessaries for our soul's health ought to have priority. But, lest this should seem to make for suicide, I would soften it by saying that we should allow ourselves only what is barely necessary for bodily health until we have done our duty by our church. Think of it. We can eat less and be much healthier; we can wear older and more unfashionable clothing, and be much more comfortable; we can give up low and fleeting pleasures, and have time for real enjoyment. And the money thereby saved will furnish forth our souls with sustenance and self-respect.

But this brings us to the root of all our difficulties as a congregation. Our souls crave no sustenance. In other words, we are lacking in real religion. We cherish a spiritual self-conceit, we imagine that we have achieved a pureness of truth, a nearness to God, that are denied to other faiths; and yet, in every way whereby men may judge of religion, we are distanced by the Nonconformists, Anglicans, and Romanists around us. Those churches labour for the suffering poor; what do we do in that way? Those churches contribute largely to missionary effort; how do we compare? Those churches evolve devotional meetings, and earnest projects for the deepening of their spiritual life; where are ours? We are lazy, niggardly and cold in comparison; in a word we are irreligious. Let us, then, humble ourselves and strive to amend. Let us cry unceasingly to the Lord that our hearts may be opened to His living, fiery love. Then all will come right. If our souls are thirsting for God no cycle run, or fireside novel, or friendly re-union, will compete for a moment with the solace to be gained at public worship. If we are big with gratitude to God, there will be no keeping us quiet when the congregation soars in praise. If we are convinced that all we possess is but lent by God that we may better ourselves and others by the use we make of it, no one will need to urge us to aid in the upkeep of God's sanctuary. It is the old, the eternal story. But one thing is needful: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

A Road Song in May.

O come! Is it not surely May?
The year is at its poise to-day.
Northward, I hear the distant beat
Of Spring's irrevocable feet;
To-morrow June will have her way.

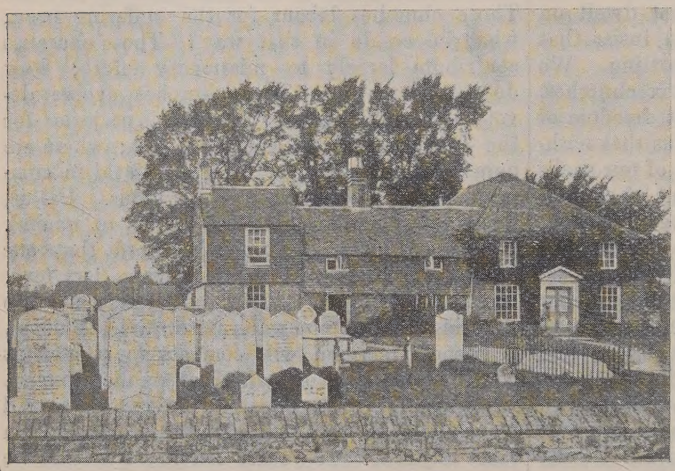
O tawny waters, flecked with sun,
Come, for your labours all are done!
The grey snow fadeth from the hills;
And toward the sound of waking mills
Swing the brown rafts in, one by one.

O bees among the willow-blooms,
Forget your empty waxen rooms
Awhile and share our golden hours!
Will they not come, the later flowers,
With their old colours and perfumes?

O wind that bloweth from the west,
Is not this morning road the best?
Let us go hand in hand, as free
And glad as little children be
That follow some long-dreamed of quest!

FRANCIS SHERMAN.

OUR ANCIENT CHAPELS.



XI.—Ditchling.

The traveller from London to Brighton, who rushes through Hassocks in a South Coast express knows nothing of the quiet scene represented in this illustration. But less than two miles from the station, and lying at the foot of the swelling South Down, is the Sussex village of Ditchling, and in its midst stands this ancient meeting house, with its picturesque cottages and peaceful graves. The two cottages were once the minister's house in far more prosperous days. On the gravestones are the names of many well known families whose descendants are upholding "the cause" in the thick of noisy towns and cities; but the Old Meeting House keeps its secluded ways, cherishing its associations, and living upon its past.

For although hidden so modestly away from all danger of notoriety, it yet has a not uninteresting history. The present building goes back to about 1717, and a yet earlier one formerly occupied the ground. An unusually open trust deed directs the property "to be applied to such charitable use or uses as the trustees for the time shall think most proper." Under these open conditions there has been no hindrance to progress, and a General Baptist Chapel has become a Free Christian Church. Many of its earliest records have been preserved, and some of its minutes published.

The first ministers appear to have been John Dancy, Michael Marten, and Stephen Agate, and their sons and grandsons then carry on the tradition as deacons or elders of the congregation. William Evershed was also held in high regard; for he delivered his first sermon at Ditchling, when only nineteen, and astonished his friends by the originality of his information. And at Ditchling he died beloved in the eighty-second year of his age.

With the beginning of this century, the rite of baptism was no longer made necessary; and, in 1803, Abraham Bennett accepted the ministry, remaining for fifteen years, and rather staggering his then hearers by rejecting the doctrine of the miraculous conception. Henry Acton, of Lewes, next took the service, removing afterwards, however, to Walthamstow, and from there to Exeter, where he ministered to George's Meeting House for over twenty years. A series of short ministries follows, held in turn by Gideon Duplock, James Isdaile, George Withall, Thomas Grimes, and William Linwood. They bring down the pastorate to Thomas Gilbert, who stayed eleven years, and then, in 1852, emigrated to New Zealand.

From 1857 to 1866 students from Manchester College supplied the pulpit each alternate week, and thence for twenty-three years almost without break, until the college removed to Oxford. It is now supplied regularly by the Provincial Assembly.

F. K. F.

London Unitarians Fifty Years Ago.

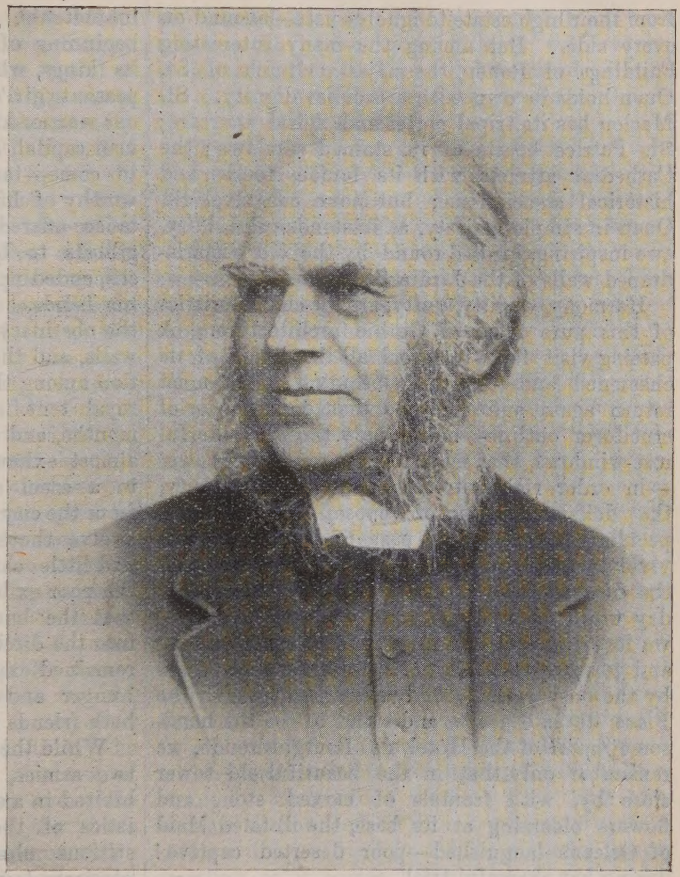
This is the title of a paper by the late Dr. Sadler, and read by him at a meeting of the Rosslyn Hill Congregational Society in 1884, and afterwards printed in *The Christian Reformer*. It has been republished by the Rev.

F. K. Freeston, and can be obtained direct from him, or from Essex Hall (1s. each; by post, 1s. 1½d). Mr. Freeston has been able to secure excellent portraits of the ministers of that time, in addition to one of the author. We are sure that many of our readers will be glad to possess this charming memorial of London Unitarians in 1838. The portraits of Thomas Madge, Dr. Hutton, Edward Tagert, Robert Aspland, and W. J. Fox are admirable reproductions, while Dr. Sadler's narrative has the distinctive note of his simple, unaffected style. Dr. Sadler had a very high appreciation of the men with whom in younger days he had been brought in contact. His account of the change of view which took place among our ministers in that fifty years is wise and suggestive, and his concluding words should be taken to heart by us all:

"I have referred to the changes which have taken place in point of view, and in some of which I rejoice; but I think there are some respects in which those who preceded us had an advantage over ourselves. Partly from their habit of meeting more frequently in social intercourse, and partly from the fact that there was less of transition in their time than in ours, they understood one another better than we do. They had a common vocabulary, and words employed by them were almost invariably taken in the sense intended. I confess that latterly I have been sometimes astonished and pained at finding a new and objectionable meaning attributed to expressions familiar to me from my childhood, as if the old 'family traditions' were either unknown or set at nought. In a world where everything changes there will of course be some modification in the interpretation and use of words; but it seems to me worth while for our younger ministers to make themselves acquainted with what our fathers meant by what they said."

In heavenly sunshine live no shades of Fear;
The soul there—busy or at rest—hath peace;
And music floweth from the various world.

ALLINGHAM.



THE LATE REV. DR. SADLER.

Reminiscences of Rouen.

A fringe of long, low, irregular, zebra-striped houses hangs about the outskirts of Rouen, and makes a picturesque approach to the charming old town nestling among its wooded hills. Pleasant it is for the English traveller—linked as he feels himself to be by hereditary interest to the land of Rollo—to wander at will through the quaint streets of the old Norman capital, admiring the time-chastened beauty of antique gables, half-ruined *tourelles*, disused belfries, steeped like all his surroundings in "the tender grace of a day that is dead." Temples of the present, and temples of the past—the latter beautiful still, although in many cases fallen

from their high estate to ignoble uses—abound on every side. But among the many interesting buildings of Rouen, the majestic church of St. Ouen holds its own with a peculiar dignity. St. Maclou has its tripal portal and spiral staircase; St. Patrice boasts of its stained windows; the Cathedral attracts with its famous tombs and historical associations; but none can rival St. Ouen in simple majesty, as it stands calm, lofty, awe-inspiring, girdled round by the old wistaria-draped walls of the Jardin St. Ouen.

Harmony, dignity, unity, are the characteristics of this pure ideal of Gothic architecture. A passing visit fails to reveal all the details of its chastened and dignified beauty. One must return again and again to that dim interior of cruciform outline—must study those wonderful rose-windows, that majestic square pierced tower—in order rightly to apprehend the simplicity, the delicious sense of repose, which are its peculiar charm. The past of Rouen is more vivid than its present. *That* is the reality; this the dream. The ceaseless hum of the work-a-day world hard by recedes into the distance; we forget the restless life of toil and moil coming and going upon the broad Seine river as it flows by the busy *quais*. And as we pass through the Place de la Pucelle, and stand before the handsome *façade* of the Hôtel de Bourghtéroude, we remember only that in the beautiful old tower close by, with frontels of carved stone and flowers blooming at its base, the ill-fated Maid of Orleans languished—poor deserted captive! during her shameful trial.

Memories of Jeanne d'Arc are rife in Rouen. The stately walls of St. Ouen looked down upon the misery of her public recantation. Through the city streets, with that pitiful cry: "Rouen! Rouen! must thou be my last abode!" which the girlish lips could not quite repress, she passed to the old market-place, there to undergo the cruel sentence of death, in the shame and the blame of which sentence it is difficult to decide whether France or England bore the greater share. A tardy justice has been done to La Pucelle's memory; and an indifferent statue of Joan now occupies the place on which she suffered.

That fifteenth century, which witnessed the tragedy of Jeanne d'Arc, was an eventful one for Rouen, and fruitful of much woe for its wretched inhabitants. It was in the year 1418—in the beginning of those troubles for the country and its kings, which were afterwards to rouse the peasant girl's sympathies to fever-pitch—that our warrior-king Henry V. laid siege to the Norman capital, and there—like his brother in years to come—tarnished his fame by cruelty unworthy of him. Provoked by the sturdy resistance offered by the inhabitants, he caused gibbets to be erected around the walls, and suspended upon them all prisoners who fell into his hands. But this barbarity only stimulated the obstinacy of the brave Normans within the walls, and their desperate sallies worked destruction among the English sometimes almost to the royal tent. When the siege had lasted four months, and the provisions of the garrison were almost exhausted, famine drove the Rouennois to a cruel expedient. The garrison expelled from the city as "useless mouths" no less than twelve thousand inhabitants, including women and little children! But the besiegers refused the poor exiles a passage through their lines, so that the houseless wanderers were driven back into the ditches beneath the ramparts, and there remained exposed, not only to wind and weather, hunger and thirst, but also to the missiles of both friends and foes.

While they lay thus dying by inches between two armies, their friends within the city exhibited in a curious manner one of the characteristics of the Middle Ages—namely, the superstitious observance of religious rites. The garrison lowered baskets from the walls to receive the newly-born infants, who were drawn up to be received into the Christian Church, and then—having been baptised—were lowered again to their dying mothers, and to their earthly heritage of misery and death! Yet, still the siege went on, and no expedients availed to save the Rouennois from their persevering enemy. After a brave defence, which lasted six months, famine and treachery together at last overcame the endurance of the besieged. But it is pleasant to find it recorded by the old chroniclers that the victorious English king made it a special condition of the treaty of surrender that the survivors of the ill-fated twelve thousand should be welcomed back into the town, and supported for a whole year at the expense of their fellow-citizens.

Every stone of these venerable streets seems eloquent with traditions of ancient days, and not the least marvellous among them is the legend of St. Romain, the city's patron saint. The local chronicles have ever kept in mind the memory of his valiant exploit in the olden times, and if the tale be true, a debt of gratitude indeed do the Rouennois owe to their brave bishop. Once when all Rouen trembled with fear because of a cruel dragon which devasted the country round, devouring all who came in his way, St. Romain, we are told, went forth alone, robed in episcopal state, to the encounter of the public enemy; and overawing the beast by the mere majesty of his episcopal countenance, re-entered the city in triumph, leading the dreaded monster captive by his stole! Thinking of these things, filled with dream-visions of "vanished hands," hearing everywhere time-softened echoes of "voices that are still," one comes and goes by shallow stairs, by red-tiled floors, by dark and narrow ways overhung by richly carven frontels. Sweet little pictures await one at unexpected corners: quaint figures frame themselves unconsciously in odd little creeper-shaded casements. How can one paint the bright, many-coloured life of these foreign streets, where, amidst so much apparent gloom, *la bagatelle* seems to be the serious business of life! The irregular houses throw capricious shadows of many varied lengths upon the black and white lozenges of the marble pavement, and the shade makes more striking the bits of high light which force themselves into notice now and again: the milk-seller's white cap frills—the snowy flapping headgear of a Sister of Charity who is coming down the street with her dangling rosary—the cheerful faces and spotless bibs of some passing *religieuses*.

The picturesqueness of a foreign town seems to culminate on market-day. Then the wide *place* is crowded with wares both animal and vegetable. The vendors — in little nooks sheltered from the sun by awnings overhead— are doing their best in single-handed combat with many a bargain-loving customer. The purchaser threatens, cajoles, argues in turn, while a *petite porteuse* stands patiently by with her basket to await the result. The scene does not strike her; she has seen so many of them; but an Englishman, to whom it is a novelty, looks on amused at the chatter around him, and admires the perfect good humour with which it is carried on. These light-hearted French are as merry over their business as John Bull is serious in his pleasures.

Close by is the flower market, where a lively group of English girls—the matron-housekeepers yonder are busied about more material wants—are hanging admirably over some fresh-blown roses. "*Un sou; deux sous la pièce.*" So much sweetness to be bought for a halfpenny! This is a pleasant country, surely—a place whence dinginess is banished, and even the useful must be made beautiful before it can be appreciated. We English, on the contrary, deck life in Quaker colours, and wear sober, if not glum faces, to correspond with our surroundings. On this important day, there is life and bustle everywhere. Down the street out of the country come the peasant women driving their heavy-laden, well-conditioned donkeys, upon which one or two may be seen mounted and ambling along comfortably in the midst of their bales and baskets.

But on each and every day from early morn—say four or five o'clock—until bedtime, which is early to correspond, a busy life in the street beneath one's windows utters itself continually in all sorts of odd musical discordant sounds, which jumble themselves together, and make a strangely harmonious whole. Your ears soon become accustomed to the involuntary concert. After a time "*Une belle brioche!*" is no longer startling as it comes betimes round unexpected corners. At last, one even takes pleasure in listening to the strange, sing-song, monotonous cry as it dies gradually away far down the street. It seems to blend in so prettily with other voices clamouring for notice of other wares; with the jingle of horses' bells; with the inevitable clattering of wooden shoes; with the high-pitched shrill chatter of sundry citizens gossiping at the street corner; with the martial sounds of the *rappel;* and with the sweet full-toned clang of innumerable deep-mouthed bells, chief of the many characteristic features of Rouen.

K. W.

Envy not the appearance of happiness in any man, for thou knowest not his secret griefs.

Wood-Notes Wild.*

Mr. Harold Johnson has brought together into this dainty little volume a selection of short poems written during 1889-1900. They are not unworthy of the beautiful dress in which they appear. Nearly all are marked by great ease and spontaneity; nothing is forced, and a true lyrical impulse is unmistakable throughout. This is surely the case with such lines as "The One Thing Needful"—

> Only one lesson to teach,
> Only one lesson to learn,
> Give of love unto each,
> Ask love of each in return.
> Love is beginning and end,
> Love is the whole and the part;
> Friend, in the love of thy friend,
> Share in the infinite heart.

Also in "A May Wish"—

> Go feed your soul on meadow sweets,
> And bide with cowslips all the day,
> The happy moment swiftly fleets,
> So make you merry while you may.
>
> These daisy-petals, pink and white,
> And clustering may, and tender green,
> And golden sunshine's softened light,
> And silver willows deck the scene.
>
> The scene that words cannot express—
> Of peace without, of peace within,
> Of oneness with the blessedness
> Of all things—this be yours to win.
>
> Then go and breathe this sense around
> Which meek-eyed daisies daily speak—
> This calm contentment you have found
> But other sorry mortals seek.

These are simple and gracious thoughts, simply and graciously expressed. A similar felicity distinguishes the poems "Life" and "Smile at the Clouds." The prevailing note of the volume is a certain joyousness of confident hope; frequent expression is given to a lively faith in Divine Revelation as a fact of the present, and we are bidden not to seek the golden age in the times that lie behind us. In "Here and Now" it is given thus:—

> Why then seek the page of story?
> God speaks still the same as ever,
> All is good to the All-giver,
> All the scene is full of glory.
>
> Let us from the life around us,
> Strong and noble impulse borrow,
> For the coming of the morrow,
> And the work that God has found us.

The same high accent runs through "The Golden Age," an admirable lyric, which comes with the proper rush of feeling and sustains it to the end.

The one fault we have to find with Mr. Johnson is that the ease with which he writes sometimes imperils his sense of form. A few of the poems, such as "The Hope of the World," and some of the sonnets, just miss the real distinction which a more fastidious execution would have given them. It is a pity, for example, that the delicate verses, "Nativity," should be marred by so defective a line as the third in the third verse. This is a criticism, however, which we should scarcely make if it did not spring from the conviction that Mr. Johnson proves himself in this volume the possessor of a genuine lyrical faculty which deserves a cordial recognition and welcome.

* "Wood-Notes Wild," by Harold Johnson, 1889-1900. Published by the Author. To be had of the Printers, Butler and Co., 17, Ludgate Hill, Birmingham.

Rough Notes of Bible Class Lessons for Seniors.

I.—"The Idea of Religion."

Importance of the question. What is meant by Religion?

Answer not to be found in discussing the early forms of Religion. The question—What is an Oak? Not answered by discussing the Acorn. The answer will be found in its maturity, not in its seed form. So with Religion: better understood and defined as seen full-grown in Jesus, than as seen in Adam, or Jacob, or in some first awaking savage.

How does Religion begin? Various answers: (*a*) In dreams and ghost stories; (*b*) In man's fears before the face of nature; (*c*) In man's sense of awe and wonder before the great known and the great unknown; (*d*) In man's sense of the mystery of life leading to the worship of living things.

The various kinds of worship give rise to Myths. What is a Myth? "A fanciful story about something real."

All these only clear the ground for the question—What is Religion? That which "binds." Sense of obligation. Sense of dependence.

Is there any one principle and idea, or universal element in which all religions have their secret?

Yes, *i.e.*, The Self; The Not-Self, and that which adapts the one to the other and unites as in a crystal sphere—God.

Religion is in Looking Inwards; Looking Outwards; Looking Upwards.

What then is Religion in its maturity? Knowing Good; Loving Good; Doing Good.

Not any one of the above, but all in union. Religion a Trinity: *i.e.*, Knowledge, Feeling, Duty

---

II.—"Sin and Forgiveness."

Right and wrong enter into everything. Intellectual right and wrong—when it is said two and two do not make four. Mental wrong—lunatic. Moral wrong—when it is said that hate and selfishness are good. Moral lunatic.

Right and wrong way of doing everything—except moral wrong. No right way of telling a lie and committing sin—wrong altogether.

Sin is a word running all through the Bible and all through history. "All have sinned." Think of the long, black catalogue of sins. Nearly all the poverty and misery of the world comes, directly or indirectly, from sin.

Why did a good God permit sin? Huxley and John Stuart Mill on the presence of sin as an argument against the goodness of God. Either God is not omnipotent or not good.

Foolish notion of omnipotence. Omnipotence cannot do contradictory things—cannot make a thing to be and not to be in the same indivisible moment of time.

Three questions:—

1—What is sin? The choice of the lower when we might have chosen the higher. All goodness is in right choosing. No choice, no goodness. But to choose, two courses must be open before men. The possibility of good involves the possibility of evil.

2—What is the origin of sin? We throw the blame on Satan, on circumstances, on society, etc. The blame is in ourselves. Jesus content to trace sin to the heart. In the heart it has its seat. In the heart it must be conquered.

3—How are men saved from sin? Three instruments: (*a*) Repentance—the sense of shame, regret, etc., leading to confession and amendment. (*b*) Strengthening the will in the choice of good by example, counsel, encouragement, the stimulus of the highest motives, and above all by the grace received in prayer. (*c*) By teaching the heart to love the good, the beautiful, the precious, as the crown of all blessedness. When we love the good we choose it. Hence it is that Christ is the power of God unto salvation. We love in Him the good and desire it for ourselves. He is the best we know, and love and loyalty to the best we know leads always to the overthrow of sin.

On a June Morning.

The meadow-lands with golden king-cups glow,
Strown o'er their velvet carpet of pure green;
Mingled with snowy pink-tipped daisy stars,
And yellow-petalled cowslips.

From the thorn,
The fragrant-blossomed thorn, the blackbird pipes
A carol jubilant; and close at hand
His brother-minstrel, the brown, bright-eyed thrush,
A rival challenge, with full-swelling throat,
Sounds on the fair June morning!

Bush and tree
Gleam 'neath soft silver mist; whilst incense sweet
Of countless flowerets, wet with glittering dew,
Falls grateful on the sense. And bird and flower,
Meadow and woodland, with bright beauty crowned,
Silent, yet eloquent, alike proclaim
The power and wisdom of the Maker's Hand!

A. H. B.

"All A-growin'."

Among the more pleasant sounds of London, as Spring commences, are the sonorous cries echoing about the streets, "All fine flowers! All fine flowers! All a-growing, all a-blowing!" By-and-by we shall doubtless hear the second part of the chant, "Double stocks and mignonette, all a-growing! Three pots a shilling;" but for the present, as crocuses, and dwarf tulips, and hyacinths, do not accommodate themselves to the requirements of street hallooing, our

imaginations are allowed vaguely to wander respecting the treasures at our disposal. English Flora does not, indeed, present herself in great state, any more than our May wears the classic coronals of old Etruscan Maia, her godmother. A costermonger's cart is the primitive triumphal car of our flower-queen—but still, a pretty sight it is; and the wearied eye of the Londoner, satiated with brick and mortar, and advertisements, and cabs, and other hideousnesses of his glorious city, follows the poor hawker's humble donkey-dray with many a lingering look of kindness. Probably the expression, "Oh, how pretty!" finds vent many more times in a day in this town, in reference to the little moving banks of hyacinths and primulas which break the monotony of the streets, than to the most splendid of damsels in the grandest of chignons, lounging in her perfectly-appointed landau in the park.

Of course it is specially the Spring flowers which have this charm. Strawberries among fruit, and violets among flowers—what are ever like them, of all the rich things which come afterwards? When they are dead and burnt, and we have revelled in gorgeous roses and luscious peaches; when we have drunk the perfume of the heliotrope, mournful in its exquisiteness, like a song of Schubert's, and bathed our parched lips in the rich juices of the fig, meet food for gods on Olympus—even then, if the memory of a primrose, or a daffodil, or a snowdrop, come over us, it is with a touch of tenderness indescribable. Mrs. Somerville used to say: "Whatever flowers may grow in heaven, I think I shall regret *our own* roses and mignionette:" and so, whatever splendid blossoms crown us in summer, we always look back with something like a sigh to the simple flowrets of spring. And when Summer itself has gone, and the great masses of scarlet and gold and blue are fading away, and the frost has begun to touch the dahlias and smite the heliotropes with black death—then, when we see by chance the after-bloom of some little common spring flower in some sheltered nook, an auricula, or primrose, or poor shrivelled narcissus, how carefully we pluck it and inhale its youth-like smell, and sigh—we hardly know wherefore, unless it be for very tenderness, for the poor little untimely flower!

We all rejoice that flowers are to be had so plentifully in London. It was a far gloomier city ere the fashion for balconies of mignonette and stocks and Virginia creepers had set in to give an edging of brightness to our dull robe of smoky walls. But there is also something rather mortifying to a true lover of flowers in seeing them made a trade of first, and then left to wither or grow forked and rampant as the season becomes hot and dry; and understood all the time to represent—not so many gifts of nature and affection—but so many shillings and sixpences. There is always something uncomfortable about *buying* flowers, like buying a dog who is to become our bosom friend. Both flowers and pets should always be gifts, delicate little tokens of regard or tenderness, to be taken or offered; not bargained for and sold. In this point of view, the poor flower-hawker, who expends his small eloquence on his exceedingly humble rose-tree, and pretends to enjoy ecstatic raptures in smelling his heliotrope (while he invariably likens it to cherry-pie), even he is a far less objectionable person than the grand lady in the shop who asks a shilling for each sprig of lily of the valley, when pots of it are selling for ninepence in the streets, and then handles it with artful but unloving hands, making it into that hateful thing, a bouquet on wires—the very Madame Rachel of nosegays! Is there any one, we marvel, in all the world who has not once in his life kept as the most precious of gifts some dried little scrap of a violet or a jessamine, whose scent, when he or she opens its paper envelope in long following years, causes a strange rush of something—of course not tears—to the eyes? What heavy boons of jewels or gold have ever called forth that special gratitude we have felt when, lonely, sick or sad, we have received a bunch of roses or violets? Might there not be also one little word of thanksgiving sometimes on our lips to Him who has given us *all* the flowers?

The modern fashion of planting flowers in close masses of uniform size and colour, has now had a long ascendency. It is to be hoped it will not last till the dear old gardens have been all grubbed up, and many a species of delicious but disorderly flower, like lavender, and gum-cistus, and the sweet white verbena, altogether lost and forgotten. The new fashion

may suit well enough for public parks and stately pleasure-grounds, not meant to walk in, but to form a view from a window. The skill and taste they may be made to display is often amusing, and sometimes splendid. But we should as soon think of calling a Turkey carpet a picture, as of treating these kaleidoscope beds as if they made a *garden*—such a garden, for instance, as that in which grew the Sensitive Plant, with

"The pied wind flowers and the tulip tall,
* * * * *
And the wand-like lily, which lifted up,
As a Mœnad, its moonlight-coloured cup;"

and

"The jessamine faint and the sweet tuberose,
The sweetest flower for scent that grows;
And all rare blossoms from every clime,
Which grew in that garden in perfect prime."

Why—our new Scotch gardeners would make short work with such a place, and cut down the tall lilies, and root up the poor old-fashioned moss-roses, to make way for miles of brown and white leaves! As for

"The sinuous paths of lawn and of moss,
Which led through the garden along and across,"

how we should love to see them left,

"All paved with daisies and delicate bells,
As fair as the fabulous asphodels,"

as if there were no such machines as daisy-cutters invented! No! Modern flower-tending is not gardening in the old sense. It is a levelling system with a vengeance. Louis XIV. built Versailles in this spirit, and Bomba's pet garden at Caserta shews yet the vast, dreary woods, cut not only in rectangles, but with every tree beheaded, to keep it equal with its companion. This is autocratic gardening; but what have we English to do with such insults to the supreme "beauty" of Nature—the inalienable "Right of Plants" to take their own shapes, and have their loveliest individuality? Passing through an old garden on a dark summer evening is like listening to some dear old tune, of which the notes are long remembered perfumes. The rich jessamine, the homely rosemary, the lavender, pure as it grows among the rocks of Lebanon; the soft, dear old cabbage-rose, the clove pinks, the verbena-tree—each touches the sense as we pass it like the voice of our mother singing a lullaby. Even the quaint box edging bears, in its keen odour, mysterious hints and recollections, it would almost seem, of an ante-natal existence. That part of memory which is rarest of all to revive, and which for ever eludes our grasp—the memory, not of thought, but of feelings—revives in such a garden. But what will a modern parterre, with its rounds and its squares, and its yellow beds and its scarlet beds, all as stiff as so many pincushions on a table, have to give us in the way of recollections?

FRANCES POWER COBBE.

A New Book of Devotion.*

This is a selection of short, devotional passages from a large number of Unitarian writers and arranged in sections for every day in the year. The selection has been made with admirable taste by Mr. Davis, and well represents the more spiritual, tender, and mystical aspects of our Free Church piety. Yet as a book for daily, devotional use, whether by the individual or in the family, we could have wished that it had drawn its extracts from a wider area of thought and experience than Unitarianism. It is true the eternal and Catholic elements of religion are present on every page, while everything merely dogmatic and denominational is excluded. But the *cast* of thought and expression is so much alike as to give some colour to the charge of monotony. If a selection from such a limited range of authors be advisable, it could not have been better done than by Mr. Davis. Few men in England have a larger knowledge of devotional literature than the editor of *The Inquirer*. Will he not give us a second volume drawn from other sources than our own communion?

* A BOOK OF DAILY STRENGTH. *Edited by V. D. Davis, B.A., London: Philip Green, Essex Street, Strand.*

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THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

The World.

Great, wide, beautiful, wonderful World,
With the wonderful water round you curled,
And the wonderful grass upon your breast,—
World, you are wonderfully drest.

The wonderful air is over me,
And the wonderful wind is shaking the tree,
It walks on the water, and whirls the mills,
And talks to itself on the top of the hills.

You friendly Earth ! how far do you go,
With the wheat-fields that nod and the rivers that flow,
With cities and gardens, and cliffs and isles,
And people upon for thousands of miles ?

Oh ! you are so great, and I am so small,
I tremble to think of you, World, at all ;
And yet when I said my prayers to-day,
A whisper inside me seemed to say :
"You are more than the Earth, though you are such a dot ;
You can love and think, and the Earth cannot."

MATTHEW BROWNE.

The Fly and the Pitcher Plant.

Once upon a time there was a little fly who lived very happily with his father and mother and many brothers and sisters upon the borders of a large wood, in which the whole family often had many happy excursions together. Now it happened that there grew in this wood a very strange kind of plant, commonly known as a pitcher plant, because the flowers were something like pitchers. But the most extraordinary thing about it was that it was said to have the power of killing and eating insects, and many a dark, mysterious tale was told of the sudden and unaccountable disappearance of some unfortunate fly who was believed to have fallen a victim to his love for the sweet fluid which was contained at the bottom of the cup of the flower. Certain it is that many flies were seen to enter this cup who were never known to return, so that the pitcher plant was held in great dread by all, and all the little flies of a light and giddy turn of mind were solemnly cautioned by their parents never to go near it. One juvenile fly, however, who belonged to the family before-named, was of a singularly perverse and obstinate disposition, and moreover very self opinionated and conceited. In vain had his father and mother, and even his brothers and sisters, united in warning him of the too-often fatal consequences of even approaching this deadly flower. He always had an answer ready : "Oh, it won't hurt me. I only want to see, and shall be sure not to go too near it. Besides, I am getting an old fly now and may surely be trusted," and with assurances of this kind his parents had to be content. Now one fine bright morning it so happened that this little fly took it into his head that he would go and see the strange, deadly flower of which he had heard so much, so concealing his intention from his family, and merely saying that he was going for a short excursion, off he started. It was a glorious morning, and the sun's rays glinted brightly among the trees, while the fresh, warm air was full of sweet scents and pleasant sounds. Away flew our little friend, till at length he approached the dreadful neighbourhood, and behold the flower with its curious pitcher-like form was close to him. At first he gazed with all his eyes—and, you know, a fly has a good many —and then he longed with all his *foolish* little heart just to peep into that beautiful pitcher. "I will only just look," said he, as he alighted on the edge of the flower. Oh, how beautiful it looked inside ! Surely he might venture a little way down, and so he went in and found it so nice that he was gradually drawn further and further till at length he arrived at the bottom of the pitcher, and there, oh charming sight ! was a quantity of something that looked so good that he felt quite glad he had come, and began at once to taste it. It was very good—oh, ever so good ! At last, however, he had taken enough, and began to think of returning, but alas ! he found this harder than he had imagined, for no sooner did he try to climb up the inside of the pitcher than down he fell again into the sweet fluid below, for all round the inside were long hairs which pointed downwards, and so he was always slipping down again. Then that upon which he had feasted so deliciously now began to alter its character and turn sticky, so that his wings and legs soon became covered with it, and he began to feel very uncomfortable, and to wish that he had obeyed his parents, and never even approached the deadly flower. Alas ! it was too late. In vain did he long for the fresh warm air and bright sunlight once again. Slowly all his struggles were overcome, and at length he sank overpowered into the arms of this fearful death, his last thought being : "Oh, that I had believed those who knew better than I." Meanwhile, the fluid had turned acid, and a strange substance called a "ferment" had been mixed with it, and thus his body was gradually dissolved and became a source of food to the plant. The glorious sun kept on shining, and the warm air was still filled with sweet scents and sounds, just as if no little fly had paid the penalty of disobedience by a sad and terrible death. But when the poor father and mother and brothers and sisters came to know of it there was great lamentation, and many solemn cautions were given to the young people to take warning by their brother's sad fate, and never be wilful or disobedient.

CHARLES JECKS.

The wee birdie fa's when it tries ower soon to flee ;
Folks are sure to tumble when they climb ower hie ;
They wha dinna walk aright are sure to come to wrang—
Creep away, my bairnie, creep afore ye gang.

JAMES BALLANTINE.